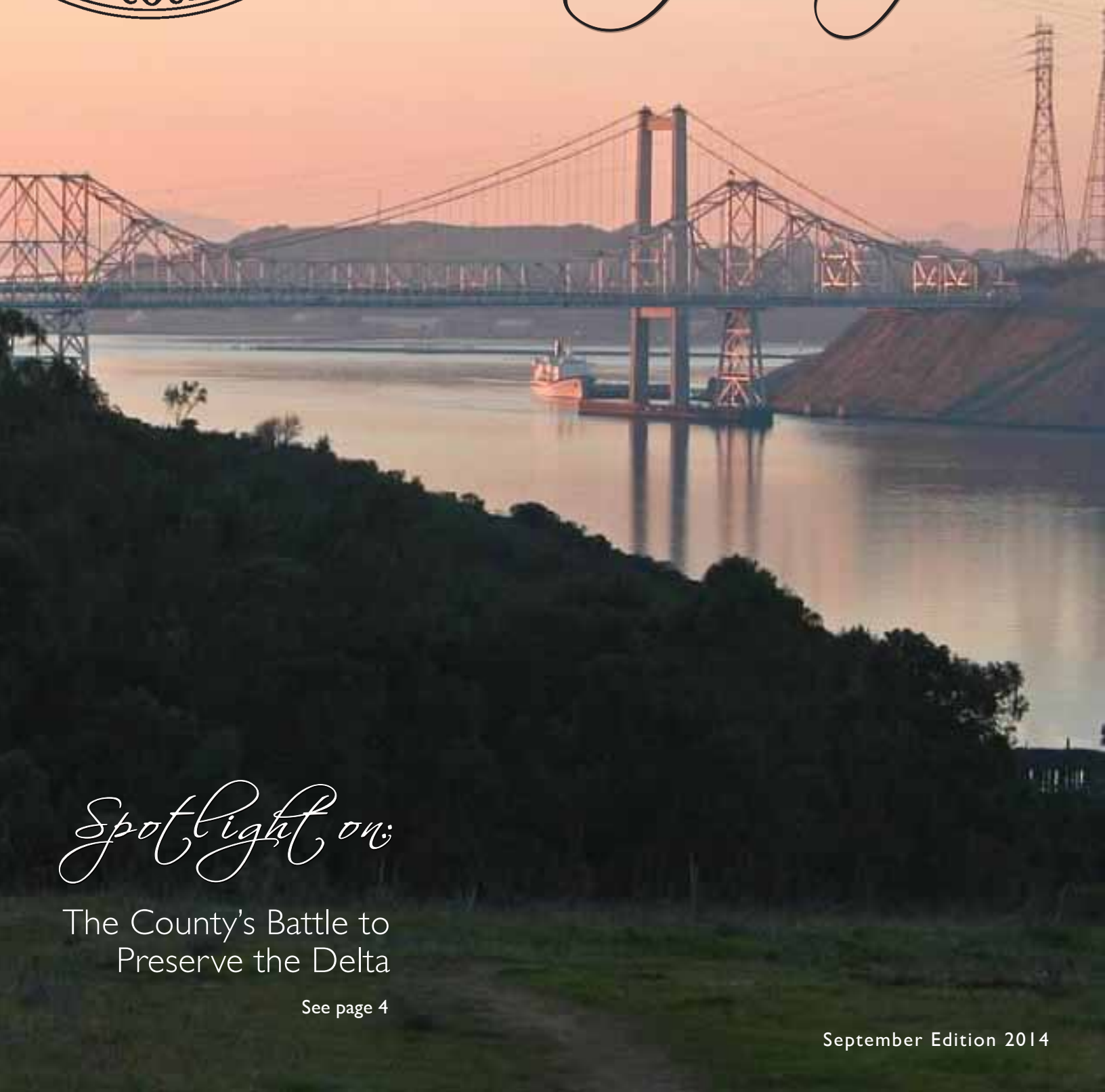


A Newsletter for Employees of Contra Costa County

County Clips



Spotlight on:

The County's Battle to
Preserve the Delta

See page 4

September Edition 2014



On June 18, Board of Supervisors Chair Karen Mitchoff delivered the annual “State of the County” address before members and guests of the East Bay Leadership Council. A summary of her remarks is included here:

With the June election cycle behind us, Contra Costa County is focusing attention on a variety of critical issues facing the County in 2014 and beyond. The Board of

Supervisors has seen significant progress made on many fronts.

We are working to achieve financial stability for the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, or ConFire, through structural changes and consideration of different service models. The District’s recommended budget for the year beginning July 1 tops \$100 million, reflecting staffing for 24 stations and 2 Emergency Medical Services squads. A two-year grant will cover the costs for 27 positions, an engine company for Clayton and 2 EMS squads.

We are pleased to have contract agreements with 65% of our 9,695 employees. These agreements have balanced the need for pension reform and management of health care costs, while still allowing for 4% pay hikes this year and 3% next year, plus lump sum payments to staff.

The Board of Supervisors has worked with the Community Corrections Partnership to create a statewide model for managing the transfer of State prisoners to County responsibility under the terms of Public Safety Realignment (Assembly Bill 109 provisions.)

Work continues between the Board and the County Hospital to develop options for the delivery of health services to the community while reducing dependency on the General Fund.

In January of this year, we were successful in eliminating the Federal Court Consent Decree, while at the same time ensuring the county’s commitment to a diverse workforce free of discrimination.

We have produced a structurally balanced and sustainable budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and, in fact, for the third year in a row! The Board’s commitment to strong fiscal planning led to Standard & Poor’s restoring the County to the coveted “AAA” rating, one of only a handful of California counties to achieve that status. This will also lower the County’s cost should we see the necessity to borrow in the future.

As we enter the second half of 2014, the County continues to face many challenges. The Board of Supervisors’ commitment to work closely with our labor organizations and community partners will continue to allow us to improve public services while remaining fiscally responsible.

Board of Supervisors Office Locations

DISTRICT I – Supervisor John Gioia

El Cerrito Office Information:

11780 San Pablo Ave., Suite D, El Cerrito, CA 94530

Phone: 510-231-8686 • Fax: 510-374-3429

Email: John_Gioia@bos.cccounty.us

DISTRICT II – Supervisor Candace Andersen

San Ramon Valley Office Information:

309 Diablo Road, Danville, California 94526

Phone: 925-957-8860 • Fax: 925-820-3785

Email: supervisorandersen@bos.cccounty.us

Lamorinda Office Information:

3338 Mt. Diablo Road, Lafayette, CA 94549

Phone: 925-646-6067 • Fax: 925-646-6068

DISTRICT III – Supervisor Mary N. Piepho

Brentwood Office Information:

3361 Walnut Blvd., Suite 140, Brentwood, CA 94513

Phone: 925-252-4500 • Fax: 925-240-7261

Email: Dist3@bos.cccounty.us

DISTRICT IV – Supervisor Karen Mitchoff

Concord Office Information:

2151 Salvio Street, Suite R, Concord, CA 94520

Phone: 925-521-7100 • Fax: 925-646-5202

Email: supervisormitchoff@bos.cccounty.us

DISTRICT V – Supervisor Federal D. Glover

Pittsburg Office Information:

315 East Leland Road, Pittsburg, CA 94565

Phone: 925-427-8138 • Fax: 925-427-8142

Email: District5@bos.cccounty.us

Martinez Office Information:

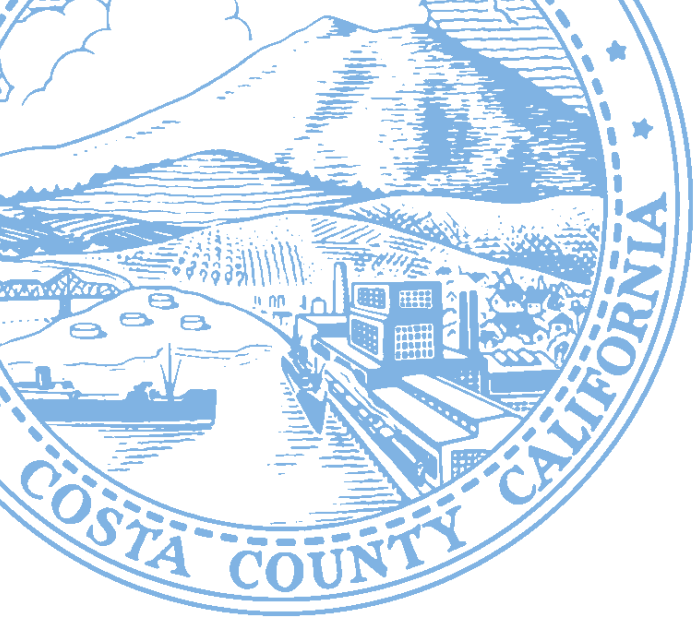
651 Pine Street, 4th Floor, Martinez, CA 94553

Phone: 925-335-8200 • Fax: 925-335-8208

Hercules Office Information:

151 Linus Pauling Drive, Hercules, CA 94547

Phone: 510-262-8800 • Fax: 510-262-8808



County Clips

September Edition 2014

Spotlight on: Battle to Preserve the Delta	4-5
Drought: High Fire Danger & Conserving Water	5-6
Health Services News	7-11
Poll Worker Volunteers Needed	11
Spare the Air	12
VESTIA Backpack Program	12
Child Care For Our Working Parents	13
Animal Services – Eagle Scout Project	14
Library News – 2014 Achievement Award	15
Cesar Chavez Celebration 2014	16-17
Secretary of the Interior Visits County	18
Veterans' Voices	19
Earthquake Preparedness	20
Joining the Century Club	21-22

Recommendations Please

County Clips is your employee newsletter. Please send us your comments, questions & suggestions.

You can contact us at (925) 313-1180 or email us at christine.wampler@contracostatv.org.



Blazing Trails – with a little help from the Workforce Development Board

68 Contra Costa County teenagers took a very big step towards adulthood in June when they graduated from the Workforce Investment Act's "In-School Youth Program." The County's Workforce Development Board funds the program in cooperation with the County Office of Education, and it provides a supportive environment for 600 youth and young adults who have barriers to graduating from high school or launching a career. The program provides mentoring, academic support, career development guidance and work experience. The goal is to give young people the knowledge, skills and abilities to be successful in either further education or in the job market. Assemblyman Jim Frazier was on hand for the June graduation and offered to write letters of recommendation for each of the graduates. One of those graduates from a decade ago returned to address the 2014 group at their ceremony and offered inspiring words. Deborah Estrada grew up as a first-generation U.S. citizen. She was having a tough time navigating her education and career opportunities before becoming part of the In-School Youth Program. She credits it for not only preparing her to continue her education, but for cracking the job market as well. Estrada is now a Wells Fargo branch manager in San Francisco.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, visit the In-School Youth page of the Workforce Development Board website at <http://www.wdbccc.com/youth/in-school-youth>.



Spotlight on:

Delta Water – A Worthwhile Fight

When you turn on the shower in the morning, grab ice from the freezer, dive into the pool on a hot summer night or paddle a kayak on the Delta, you're tapping into a resource

that is much more politically charged than you might expect: California water. At a time when our local water providers are calling upon us to conserve because of the severe drought, more basic water issues are being debated at the State Capitol and

throughout the state, including right here in Contra Costa County. The current billion dollar question is: how do we best use and manage the water that we have?

One tool that guides the County Board of Supervisors is the adopted Delta Water Platform that spells out the policies and principles of Delta protection that will best serve our residents and the environment. The Platform establishes the foundation for Supervisors Mary Nejedly Piepho and Karen Mitchoff to advocate on behalf of the County in the State and Federal political arenas.

Together with local water districts, our County continues to advocate for protection of our water quality and water supply. These issues are even more critical in 2014 with the State's proposed Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) making its way through the public process. The BDCP is the Governor's second historical effort to provide a way to divert water from Northern California's Sacramento/San Joaquin Rivers around the Delta to our neighbors in the south. It's no less controversial now than when Governor Brown advocated for the Peripheral

Canal back in his first term. Instead of just canals, though, the BDCP calls for two massive, 35 mile long tunnels to be constructed to carry water under versus around the Delta. The tunnels will have significant adverse impacts to water quality and the Delta ecosystem. The proposal prompted such a huge response to the draft environmental documents that the State will now be taking an additional look and revising its own environmental studies of the project and will make the revised studies available to the public for review.

Another tool used in the fight to protect the Delta is our affiliation with the Delta Counties Coalition, a regional partnership forged by Supervisor Mary Piepho. Both Supervisor Piepho and Mitchoff represent Contra Costa on the Coalition, as well as county supervisors from Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, and Yolo. The Coalition helps the Delta region speak with a united voice on many water issues, a voice that has often been overlooked by state and federal policymakers. County Supervisors from the Coalition have taken their positions to editorial boards up and down the state, most recently going to Los Angeles where water interests are in many cases at odds with our own. Telling our story and explaining our position, becomes all the more important with so many competing interests.

"Contra Costa County and the Delta Counties Coalition continue to fight for a seat at the main governance table and to work collaboratively with the water exporters and the state and federal agencies," notes Supervisor Mitchoff. "Our good faith efforts are not being heard."



California's Aquaduct – 701 miles of open canals and pipelines distributing water to 29 urban and agricultural water suppliers in Northern California, the San Francisco Bay Area, the San Joaquin Valley, the Central Coast and Southern California.



The proposed BDCP significantly degrades water quality, harms fish and is detrimental to the Delta, while the majority of the benefits are realized outside of the Delta. Delta counties are owed a true voice in the decision making process that will impact the Delta waterways our counties surround.”

Supervisor Mary Nejedly Piepho has been one of the Delta’s strongest allies for years, and she says earlier visioning of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan had potential. “The BDCP’s original planning principles called for capturing more water during wetter months for use during drier periods. The Governor’s twin tunnels would do just the opposite by proposing to take more water than ever before from the Delta during the driest months of the year,” Piepho states. “The proposal is contrary to the 2009 Delta Reform Act and does not achieve its landmark co-equal goals of securing a more reliable water supply and protecting, restoring and enhancing the Delta. The stark reality is that the BDCP does not create a single drop of water.”

Another issue of concern for our leadership is the magnitude of the cost of the twin tunnels. Originally pegged by the state as a \$23 billion proposal, more realistic estimates come in at \$65 billion with no strategy on where to secure the money. Proposition 1 is a scaled-down, \$75 billion water bond that will be on the November ballot to support a wide variety of water storage, efficiency, recycling, and restoration projects. Our Board of Supervisors voted to support Proposition 1 during its meeting September 16th. The monies in the water bond are not intended to fund the BDCP, which is consistent with the County’s Platform. Delta Counties Coalition representatives also support the bond measure as long as funding from it doesn’t flow to the twin tunnels project. Left unclear, though, is where the \$65 billion might be found.

All residents within Contra Costa County and the Delta have a stake in our water future. The Supervisors stand ready to work with the state and federal agencies to withdraw the flawed twin tunnels plan, and cooperatively develop alternatives that meet the needs of all Californians to improve the Delta ecosystem and improve water quality and supply reliability. We’re lucky to have the wealth of resources from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta right in our own backyard; it is our responsibility to dedicate time and energy to restoring and enhancing it.

Fire Danger High with Dry Conditions



The drought has layered dry year over dry year throughout the County, leaving our landscape even more vulnerable to fire danger. The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District put a huge emphasis on getting out the word to residents to encourage us all to take steps to make our property safer. Most importantly, this year was the call to take the Countywide ban on fireworks seriously around the 4th of July. That message appeared to have been heard, as the number of fire calls – while still significant – was less than feared over the three-day weekend. ConFire partnered with Pittsburg Police in July to take a huge cache of illegal fireworks off the street in a sting operation, resulting in three arrests. Fire investigators believe that taking more than a ton of those illegal fireworks out of circulation likely helped prevent more fires over the holiday as well.

There is certainly much that we can do as residents to take fire prevention into our own hands. One of the best moves we can make is to create a defensible space around our homes. It’s especially critical to remove all dead, dying and dry vegetation from plants, trees and bushes. If you’ve put off getting rid of the weeds and dry bushes, now is the time to do so. Local nurseries and landscapers are ready to help Californians transition into attractive landscaping that is both drought tolerant and fire resistant. You can also learn how to space plants to impede fire from spreading throughout your property. Even considering the time of day to work in the yard can make a difference, staying away from using mowers and other equipment during the hottest parts of the day. Find out how you can become fire-safe by visiting the [Contra Costa County Fire Protection District website](http://www.contra-costa-fire.com)

Managing through the Drought



*Brown is
the New Green
for your Lawn*



California is suffering the worst drought conditions in its 163-year history

Following two severely dry years, Californians entered 2014 with a sobering realization that we could be facing one of the most severe droughts in state history. The Governor issued a State of Emergency, convening a task force to look at ways to prepare for the drought and minimize its impact. How does that affect us in Contra Costa County?

Depending upon where you live, your water likely comes from one of three water districts: Contra Costa Water District, East Bay Municipal Utility District, or Dublin San Ramon Services District. The [Contra Costa Water District](#) serves about half a million customers in the central and east part of the county, and the District has asked customers to voluntarily cut water use by 15%. You can find specific resources for reducing use on their site, including a great [guide for selecting plants that don't require as much water](#). For residents in the western and southern parts of the county, [the East Bay Municipal Utility District](#) is your provider, and the District is asking for a 10% cut in use at this point. Their website has a wealth of resources as well, including how to get a [free in-home survey kit](#) to determine how much water you're using, and how to conserve. In the Dougherty Valley area, about 17,000 county residents receive water from the [Dublin San Ramon Services District](#). Water supply is most critical in this part of the county, and residents are currently dealing with mandatory 25% reduction targets. The District has set up a [special water monitoring tool online](#) that can help customers monitor their usage, and get alerts if they're using too much water.



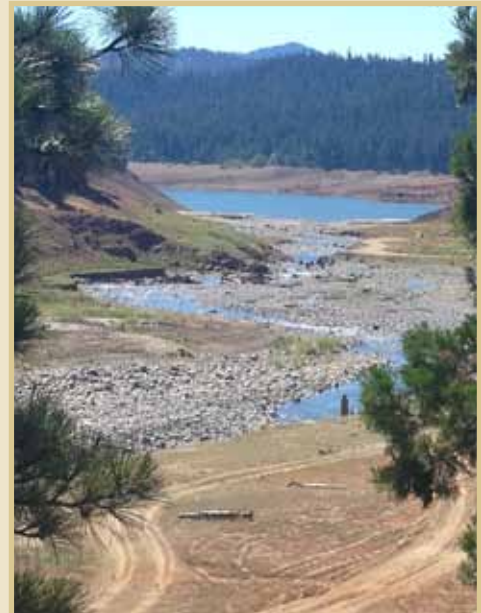
Above: Folsom Dam in 2011.

Pictured Right: Folsom Dam January, 2014



The differences in approach and guidelines from district to district point out the difficulty in getting Californians to take the drought seriously. Because each district has different water supply and storage issues, you may find yourself in a completely different situation from

a neighbor just a few blocks away. State water authorities are pressing us all to conserve, whether you're served by a district with plenty of water stored for drought years or not. The State has launched a huge outreach campaign to help residents find ways to conserve, and to keep the message at the top of our minds, even for people who aren't being asked to make major cuts. Ideas shared in the "Don't Waste Summer" campaign can be found at the [Save our Water website](#).



Right: Whiskeytown Lake, a reservoir in Shasta County in northwestern California

Miller Wellness Center



New George & Cynthia Miller Wellness Center in Martinez Opens

The George & Cynthia Miller Wellness Center, a new outpatient facility that integrates physical and behavioral health, opened to patients on May 6. The Miller

Wellness Center is located at 25 Allen Street on the campus of Contra Costa Regional Medical Center in Martinez. The 10,000-square-foot George & Cynthia Miller Wellness Center is expected to receive about 70,000 outpatient visits annually. The facility will offer primary care, pediatrics, group medical visits and same-day appointments. Behavioral health services at the site will include psychiatry, short-term individual and family therapy, outpatient care for substance abuse, support groups, and crisis management and referral into long-term treatment for children and adults. The facility was named after the retiring Congressman and his wife to honor their decades of service and dedication to improving the health of the community. A dedication ceremony attended by the Millers was held on May 12 to celebrate the opening of the Wellness Center.

For more information about the George & Cynthia Miller Wellness Center, visit www.cchealth.org/centers.



Project Homeless Connect Draws Nearly 700 to Richmond for Coordinated Services

Hundreds of volunteers, public employees and workers from community-based organizations converged on Richmond Memorial Auditorium on August 6th to deliver much-needed aid to Contra Costa County residents who are experiencing homelessness.

Project Homeless Connect, an annual project of Health Services' Homeless Program, is a one-day, one-stop event that connects those in need to an array of vital services, such as medical checkups, mental health and substance abuse services, housing programs, legal help and veterinary services for pets. This coordination clears bureaucratic and transportation barriers to serving homeless consumers.

Nearly 700 people received services at Project Homeless Connect this year, and more than 250 community members volunteered to help service providers and Homeless Program Staff.



County Supervisor John Gioia, Richmond Mayor Gayle McLaughlin and a representative from Congressman Jerry McNerney's office spoke to volunteers during a preparatory meeting on the morning of the event, and staff from Assembly members Nancy Skinner and Joan Buchanan all played key roles in planning and supporting the event.

This year, major sponsors providing key financial and logistical support included the City of Richmond and Chevron U.S.A., Inc. The Homeless Program is part of the Behavioral Health

Division of Contra Costa Health Services.

Project Homeless Connect rotates annually among the cities in Contra Costa County with the largest homeless populations. Concord will host the event in 2015.



Volunteers helping people and pets at Project Homeless Connect 2014.





Mental Health Services Adult Program Chief Victor Montoya, Behavioral Health Services Director Cynthia Belon, Supervisor Karen Mitchoff and Telecare CEO Anne L. Bakar at the Hope House opening celebration.

New Facility to Help Meet Mental Health Needs

The Behavioral Health Services Division has opened a new residential treatment facility in Martinez. The 16-bed Hope House is located on the hillside above Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and is intended to help mental health consumers avoid hospitalization as well as to assist in the transition from the hospital or long-term facilities to the community. Hope House provides round-the-clock, recovery-focused services that encourage successful transitioning back into the community. Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding was used to build Hope House, which is located at 300 Ilene Street. Behavioral Health Services contracted Telecare Corporation to be the service provider at the facility.

Nurses Honored for Saving Co-Worker's Life at Juvenile Hall

Two nurses from the Health Services Department were awarded a "Certificate of Heroism" in March after saving the life of a co-worker who suffered cardiac arrest at John A. Davis Juvenile Hall. Nurses Liz Maaske and Mary Vesey, as well as emergency responders, were given the certificate by the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division for saving Edward Taraskewich, the lead cook at Juvenile Hall.

On the morning of January 6, the nurses immediately responded to a call for medical help in the kitchen of the Martinez juvenile detention facility. When they arrived, Taraskewich had no pulse and wasn't breathing. Maaske initiated CPR while Vesey prepared the automated external defibrillator (AED), a portable electronic device that shocks the heart into a regular rhythm. They were able to revive Taraskewich before paramedics arrived. Thanks to Maaske and Vesey, Taraskewich was able to celebrate his 63rd birthday with his wife.

"I would never have seen this day without Liz and Mary," said Taraskewich.

Maaske and Vesey are employees of the Detention Health Services program of Contra Costa Regional Medical Center (CCRMC) and Health Centers. The nurses are assigned to Juvenile Hall, which is managed by county's Probation Department.

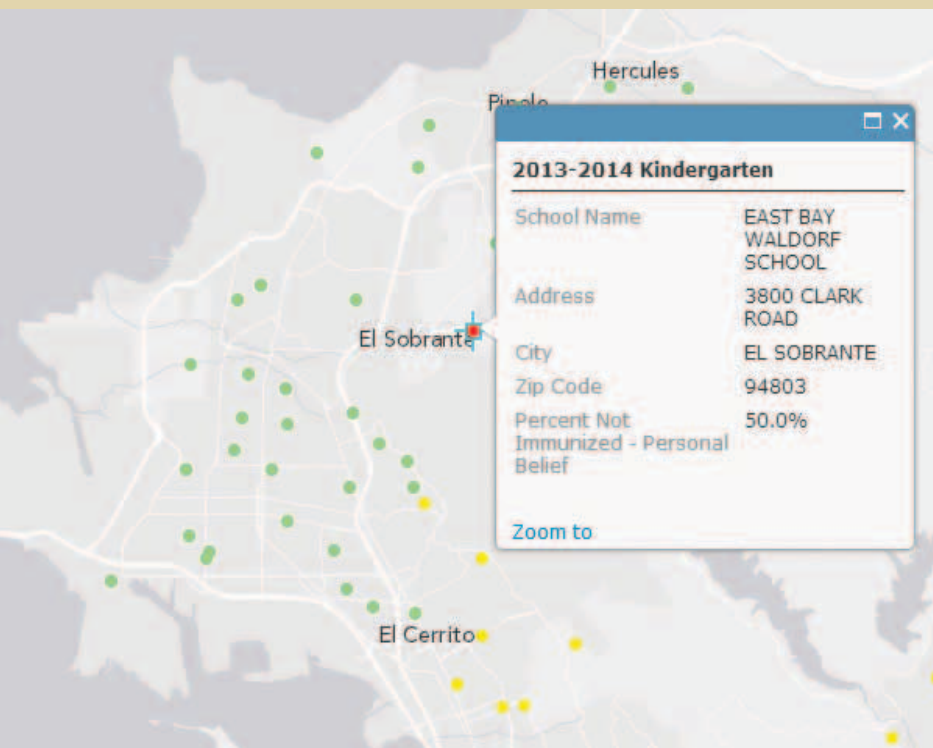


Nurses Mary Vesey (left) and Liz Maaske received a Certificate of Heroism for using CPR and an AED to revive their friend and co-worker, Edward Taraskewich.

New Online Tool Helps Track Immunization Levels at Local Schools



Public Health has launched a new online tool that provides the public with data about immunization levels at schools and daycare facilities across Contra Costa County. The information is presented in two interactive online maps that mark the location of schools with colored dots that indicate the percentage of kindergarteners or preschoolers at the campus who lack state-required immunizations because of Personal Belief Exemptions (PBEs). The number of families who use PBEs to waive immunization requirements has grown in recent years. While the percentage of Contra Costa kindergartners with PBEs is lower than the state average, there are local campuses where as many as half of the students are not vaccinated against serious preventable diseases such as measles, polio and pertussis. "It takes only 10% of the population to opt out to create an elevated risk of outbreak that could affect anyone, including those who were vaccinated," Immunization Coordinator Paul Leung said.



A detail from the interactive map showing the school with the lowest percentage of immunized kindergarteners.

Environmental Health Division to Help Contra Costa Cities Identify Bed Bug Infestations

The Environmental Health Division has begun providing a new inspection service to municipal and county code enforcement agencies working to eliminate bed bug infestations. Concord became Environmental Health's first client, entering into a 6-month trial period with Environmental Health to provide expert inspection services when needed for code enforcement actions. Concord recently categorized bed bugs as a "public nuisance" in its municipal code, meaning landlords who do not take care of reported infestations may face fines.

Under a new program, cities and other agencies can ask the Environmental Health Division to inspect facilities for bed bugs

Concord will use our inspectors to verify the presence of bed bugs when a property owner does not respond to a complaint filed with the city by hiring their own pest management company. Supervising Environmental Health Specialist Michele DiMaggio will conduct the initial inspections, and coordinate with other state and local agencies to provide specialized bed bug training for our other inspectors. The Hazardous Materials Program is also involved: Tanya Drlik, Integrated Pest Management Coordinator, will continue to provide bed bug advice to residents and landlords, and continue to develop educational materials.

For more information, contact Michele Dimaggio at michele.dimaggio@hsd.cccounty.us or 925-692-2534



West Nile Virus Present in Contra Costa County

This year there has been one confirmed human case of West Nile virus in Contra Costa County. The case involved a man in his 60s from Central Contra Costa County, and it is important for everyone to take precautions because the virus has been confirmed to be present throughout the county. The Contra Costa resident was hospitalized, but has been released from the hospital and is recovering, said Erika Jenssen, Contra Costa Public Health's Communicable Disease Programs Chief.

The virus is typically spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. There have been no fatalities related to West Nile virus in Contra Costa since 2006, and there are typically between three and five cases reported each year in Contra Costa. In 2013 we had five human cases and all recovered.

"The risk of becoming ill from the bite of a mosquito infected with West Nile virus is low. Most people who become infected will not develop symptoms and will not need to seek care," Jenssen said. "However, in some cases, it can be very serious. This is a reminder that when the weather is warm it's important to reduce the risk of West Nile virus by taking precautions to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes."

West Nile Virus symptoms are usually mild, such as fever, headache and body ache. However, people over 50 years of age and those with diabetes and/or hypertension may be more vulnerable to severe symptoms.

To avoid being bitten by mosquitos and infected with West Nile, people can take the following steps:

- Avoid activity outside when mosquitoes are most active, especially at dawn and dusk.
- When outdoors, wear long pants, long sleeve shirts and other protective clothing.
- Apply insect repellent that contains DEET, picaradin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535 according to label instructions.
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding. Mosquitos can breed in as little as one soda cap full of water.
- Contact Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control if there is a significant mosquito problem where you live or work, including abandoned swimming pools, which can breed up to 1 million mosquitos and can affect people up to five miles away.
- Report neglected swimming pools by calling 925-771-6195 or visiting www.ContraCostaMosquito.com. Anonymous calls are accepted.
- Report dead birds by calling 1-877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473).

For more information about the West Nile virus, go to <http://cchealth.org/westnile/> or <http://westnile.ca.gov/>.

YOUR COUNTY WANTS YOU!



November 4, 2014 Election – Poll Workers Needed

You can play a role in the November 4th election beyond just casting your ballot. County workers are among those invited to serve as poll workers throughout Contra Costa County. You'll need to make arrangements through your supervisor to take time off from your position. We are in particular need of bilingual poll workers, (English/Spanish, English/Japanese, English/Korean, English/Tagalog, English/Chinese, English/Vietnamese and English/Hindi).

In order to be a poll worker, the state Elections Code requires you to currently be a registered voter in California, or you may be a non-voter who is a permanent resident in the United States.

No prior experience is necessary and training is provided. Poll workers receive a stipend of \$125 inclusive of attending a two-hour required training and working on Election Day from 6:00 am to 9:00 pm.

Have high school kids at home who need to fulfill community service requirements? Check with their school offices to determine if they can take the day off to serve. High school students who are at least 16 years of age, are citizens or will be by November 4th, and who have at least a 2.5 GPA can serve as poll workers as well. Student poll workers will receive the stipend in addition to the community service credits.

Applications to be a poll worker can be found on the Contra Costa County Elections Division website at www.cocovote.us/get-involved/county-employee/. Applications may be submitted via email to eo@vote.cccounty.us or call the Elections Division at (925) 335-7873.



The [Bay Area Air Quality Management District](#) issues Spare the Air Alerts when [ozone pollution](#) is forecast to reach unhealthy levels in the Bay Area.

The 2014 [Spare the Air smog season](#) runs from May through October.

To find out when a Spare the Air Alert is in effect, register for [email AirAlerts](#), call 1(800) HELP-AIR, download the [Spare the Air app](#) or connect with Spare the Air on [Facebook, Twitter and other social media](#). Spare the Air Alerts will also be posted on the Spare the Air and [www.baaqmd.gov](#) websites.

Spare the Air Every Day: Help reduce pollution and prevent Spare the Air Alerts! Here are some great ways to Spare the Air and find a better way to work:

Commute Tips: Visit [stacommudetips.org](#) to get all the information you're looking for about commute programs and incentives available where you live and work.

Walk or Ride Your Bike: Save money and improve your health, too! Use the Spare the Air app's Bike Route Planner or the [511 Bike Mapper](#) to plan your trip.

Take the Bus, Ferry or Train: Save gas and money – and reduce stress! Find the fastest route on [511 Trip Planner](#).

Carpool: Commute with colleagues or neighbors instead of driving alone. Find your [rideshare match](#) at [511.org](#).

Skip a Trip or Link Your Errands: By combining or eliminating trips, you reduce pollution in addition to saving gas and time.

Donations Needed for Backpack Program



What's in a backpack? Sure, we know the answer to that question - a box of pencils, pens, paper, and a binder. These are some of the critical items needed for school.

But what happens to those low income or foster children who attend class unprepared? They feel embarrassed, out of place and totally left out. We need to encourage our children to succeed by giving them the right tools. We at the Volunteers Emergency Services Team in Action (VESTIA) strive to provide these children with a backpack full of supplies needed according to their grade level, so they can be ready for school. It is so important to provide our children with their essential needs, so that they can succeed in life. Last year, with help of community donations, VESTIA was able to provide approximately 1500 backpacks with supplies to children in need.

What does a backpack mean to a child? Besides having the right supplies in it to be prepared for school, the backpack becomes part of the child's personality. A supervisor who hands out backpacks during our program told us how the little children come in with a smile on their little faces, excited to know they can pick out a backpack. The children take their time and examine all the backpacks available in their grade level. You can see their little face expressions, while trying to pick out the right one. Once they have picked out "the one," they walk out of the office, so proud and happy and ready for school! How would you like to help a child be ready for school?

If you are interested in donating please contact VESTIA at 925-521-5060.



"Kids at Work"...

a Unique Option for the County's Working Parents

Knowing your child is having fun and learning in a safe environment while you work is every parent's desire. For parents who work for Contra Costa County, the Martinez-based "Kids at Work" child care center makes this possible.

"I feel safe. I am happy. Every day I leave her here, I know she is in good hands. I know she enjoys this place. Even when she is not here, she asks to come, so you know she is having fun," said "Kids at Work" (KAW) parent Karla Ruiz. Since 1997, "Kids at Work" has provided quality care and education for pre-school children of county and other local government employees in Contra Costa County. "We are committed to providing a quality learning experience through fun and play," said Director Lori Sullivan.

For many parents, the connections their children have with classmates and teachers are very special. "She learns, she gets to bond with kids, but most importantly she has a special bond with the director and her teacher Ms. Lupe, whom we very much appreciate.

How she talks and says good things about this place and the teachers when she is home brings a lot of comfort to me," said Ruiz.

"Kids at Work" is conveniently open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., and is located on Public Works property in Martinez with easy access to Highway 4. There are openings now for fall placements. KAW offers a variety of hands-on educational activities, including enrichment activities, water play, reptile shows, interactive musical shows and a comprehensive kindergarten readiness curriculum.

"We want the parents to feel secure and comfortable, knowing their children are having a good time, and are safe. We're in this field because we enjoy all these little experiences," said Sullivan. "The relationship we have with

the parents is also very important; if the parents can go to work and not worry about their kids, that is wonderful."

The school is located on Public Works property in Martinez with easy access to Highway 4. For more information contact Director, Lori Sullivan at 925-313-2380 or [email kaw@pw.cccounty.us](mailto:kaw@pw.cccounty.us).



Scouts Doing Good Work for the Animals in our County

Throughout the year Contra Costa County Animal Services is blessed to receive many donations from our generous community. We receive donations from private citizens, local businesses, as well as great community organizations such as the Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts of America. Contra Costa County Animal Services, would like to take the time to recognize a local Boy Scout, now turned Eagle Scout named Arron Schubert. Arron is a local Scout from Brentwood and he chose the Martinez Animal Shelter to perform his Eagle Scout project to move on to the rank of Eagle.



The Eagle Scout is the highest rank attainable in the Boy Scouting program. A scout who attains this rank is called an Eagle Scout or Eagle. Since its introduction in 1911, the Eagle Scout rank has been earned by more than 2 million young men. To earn the Eagle Scout badge the scout must plan and carry out an extensive community service project. The scout has to plan, organize, lead and manage their peer volunteers from beginning to completion. They must also document the entire process and turn it in to their scout leaders when finished for approval. For his Eagle project, Arron decided to deliver several different projects to the Martinez Animal Shelter as well as make a very sizeable financial contribution to the animal benefit fund.

While on his spring break from school, Arron managed a team of his peers and family volunteers to complete five different projects for the animal shelter.



Arron's team assembled 100 organic rabbit chew toys, 12 home-made 6 ft dog leashes, 2 redwood benches for our dog runs, a portable storage shed for our barn area and a large 52x60x62" pine chicken coop. Arron also raised the funds to purchase the supplies for these projects. For the final portion of his projects, Arron donated the left over funds to the animal benefit fund. The generous donation of \$700 may be used towards funding spay and neuter surgeries or towards the medical care of some of our special needs animals residing in the shelter.

The Boy Scout slogan is to, **"Do a good turn daily"**. With the combined efforts of the Martinez Animal Shelter's Humane Education program, the scout volunteers and guidance from his family, Arron was able to accomplish something special, **"each day"** for the animals at the shelter. On behalf of the animals and staff at the Martinez Animal Shelter, we would like to thank Arron and his family and Troop #444 for a FANTASTIC job well done!

As if Arron's generous project wasn't enough, we'd also like to mention that he and his family adopted a dog from the Martinez Shelter as well. Upon his initial meeting to discuss his project ideas, Arron was given a personal tour of the shelter, by our Humane Education Coordinator. Shortly after his tour, Arron's family adopted a dog who is now known as "Mugz". We have heard from Arron that Mr. Mugz is adapting to his new family very well and is going to be starting training classes too. Thank you to the Schubert Family, their friends and of course Arron for your dedication and service to the animals in our shelter. We'd also like to congratulate Arron for obtaining his Eagle Scout badge. Well done!

Arron is just one of several scout members that serve our community everyday and fortunately for us, our local animal shelter. If you know of a scout member or troop looking to perform a community service project or if your troop is looking to learn more about their local animal shelter and all the good work that takes place in the Martinez Shelter, please contact our Humane Education Department Coordinator Noell Crosse at 925-335-8340 or you can email noell.crosse@asd.cccounty.us.

Contra Costa County Library “LiveChat” wins Best in Category in 2014 National Achievement Awards



The National Association of Counties (NACo) has granted Contra Costa County a 2014 Achievement Award for its program titled LiveChat: eGovernment Customer Relationship Management by the Library in the category of Libraries.

LiveChat librarians help citizens quickly navigate Contra Costa County government services online, connecting real-people, with real-needs in real-time to the information they seek. Whether it's zoning information, filing a fictitious business name, finding affordable housing, or reporting child or elder abuse, library staff can quickly point citizens to the online information, department, or service they need to efficiently and effectively transact business with the County online.

The Library is uniquely positioned to provide the LiveChat information service for all county departments and to tackle the shared problem all departments face in helping citizens locate county services online. Helping people find information is something librarians do every day and by embedding LiveChat throughout the County website, citizens are able to quickly discover how their local library is ready, able, and happy to help them find the government info or service they're looking for.

Due to its exceptional results and unique innovations, the Library program has been chosen to receive the honor of Best of Category! Congratulations to everyone involved in developing this innovative program! Your hard work continues to yield positive results for Contra Costa County.

The award was presented on July 13, 2014 at NACo's 2014 Annual Conference: County Solutions and Ideas Marketplace in Orleans Parish, La.



Library Leads the Way for Early Learning

California's State Librarian Greg Lucas stopped by the Pleasant Hill Library on September 5, 2014, to congratulate staff on the strides being made in providing innovative early learning opportunities for young kids, their families and childcare providers. Contra Costa County library is part of the Early Learning with Families @ Your Library initiative. The program helps public libraries provide enriching, developmentally appropriate, family-centric services.

At a time when many people are accessing information in so many different ways, it is easy to overlook the value of walking into a library. "Libraries change lives," Lucas said. "One of the most important ways they do that is by fostering strong early childhood learning practices. It always inspires me when I get out of Sacramento and see firsthand the amazing things public libraries all over California do every day – often on shoestring budgets. It feels particularly good to recognize libraries like Contra Costa County for doing so much to create future generations of life-long learners."

Contra Costa County Library demonstrates its dedication to early learning through multiple weekly program offerings for kids and their parents or caregivers, as well as creating early learning centers in many community libraries with soft seating, literacy-based learning games, toys, and, of course, books.

Board of Supervisors Chair Karen Mitchoff was on hand for the State Librarian's visit, along with County Librarian Jessica Hudson, Pleasant Hill City Councilmember Michael Harries, and Field Representative Jamario Jackson from Assemblywoman Susan Bonilla's office.

You can find out more online about the Early Learning Initiative, and learn more about all the programs and services offered by the Contra Costa County Library by visiting the Library website.

Cesar Chavez Celebration 2014



Music: Mariachi Ortega



Mistress of Ceremonies:
Robin Lipetzky, Public Defender



Keynote Speaker:
Alvaro Ramirez, PH.D.

Cesar Chavez, Celebration Continued



Dancers: Ballet Folklorico Netzahualcoyotl



Supervisor
Mitchoff
addresses
the audience



Below: 2014 Honorees: Left to Right

Martin Magsombol, Artiste, Freedom High School
Daphne Torres, Sports Leadership, Freedom HS
Cesar Munoz, School Leadership, Richmond HS
Maxwill "Max" Hauser, Good Samaritan, El Cerrito HS
Erron Williams, Valiant Volunteer, Dozier-Libby Medical HS
Adolfo Gonzalez, Good Samaritan, Ygnacio Valley HS (Not present)



2014 Youth Hall of Fame

U.S. Secretary of the Interior Visits Contra Costa County

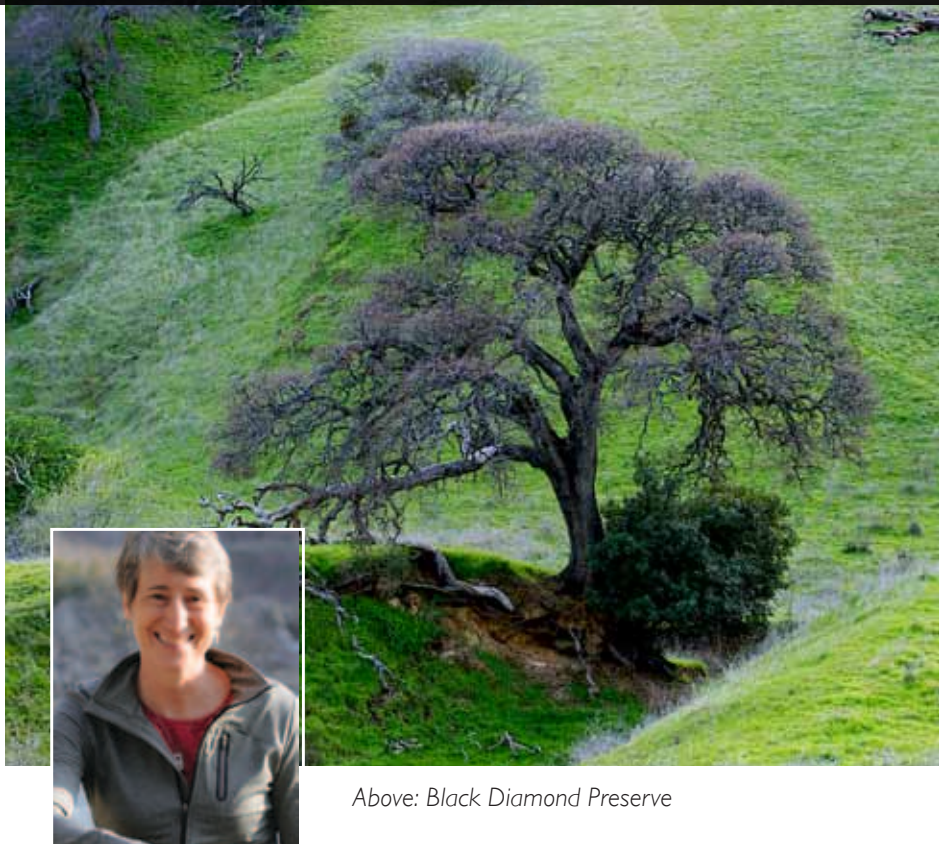
U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell hosted a discussion with Contra Costa County community leaders and other experts from around the state to discuss the importance of partnerships between the federal government, states, private landowners and other stakeholders when it comes to conserving threatened and endangered species and supporting smart economic development.

The discussion, held May 5, 2014, at the East Bay Regional Park District's Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve near the City of Antioch, spotlighted a model of collaboration known as habitat conservation plans (HCP). HCPs are agreements under the Endangered Species Act through which local land use agencies, landowners and other partners work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to proactively address long-term conservation needs, maintain local control over land use and provide flexibility to meet economic growth initiatives.

Prior to the stakeholder discussion, Jewell toured the East Contra Costa County HCP, which covers nearly 175,000 acres and provides for the conservation of 28 imperiled species, including the San Joaquin kit fox, the California red-legged frog and the western burrowing owl.

"The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan is a model of how community partners can work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered species can go hand-in-hand with economic activities and development," Jewell said. "This community has shown through this collaborative approach that we don't need to choose between protection of our wildlife and a strong economy – we can have both."

Beginning in 2002, Contra Costa County joined the cities of Brentwood, Clayton, Oakley and Pittsburg to develop the East Contra Costa HCP that gives local cities and agencies control over endangered species permitting in their jurisdiction. Under the plan, landowners and other developers fulfill their obligations under the Endangered Species Act by paying a fee or providing their own conservation measures designed to protect listed species and their habitat. In exchange, landowners can proceed with otherwise lawful activities related to land use or economic development. The County's Department of Conservation Development staffs the joint powers authority that leads implementation of the HCP.



Above: Black Diamond Preserve

"The approval and successful implementation of the East Contra Costa County HCP is a testament to the power of forging partnerships on difficult planning issues," said Mary Nejedly Piepho, Chair of the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy and a member of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors. "Support from both business and environmental interests has enabled effective collaboration among local, state and federal agencies. The result will be a significant network of protected lands acquired from willing sellers and more certain, more efficient permitting of public infrastructure and private development."

In her meeting with stakeholders, Jewell noted that in the past six years, more than \$59 million has been invested in conservation efforts under the plan, including acquisition of more than 11,000 acres, more than one third of the 30,000 acres required to be conserved over the HCP's 30-year life.

Meanwhile, economic development continues with 56 projects receiving streamlined permitting through the plan to date, including the BART Station in Antioch, an interchange and lanes on Highway 4, and the Oakley Generating Station.

"These projects provide thousands of jobs and critical economic development," Jewell said. "In addition, the proactive, smart planning that the community did on the front end ensures that there is a network of open spaces that enhance our quality of life and allow for things like hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and other outdoor activities."

VETERANS' VOICES

of Contra Costa

Veterans' Voices....

....A new way to reach out to those who have served

Contra Costa County is home to more than 65,000 veterans, and our Veterans Service Office has expanded its outreach efforts considerably over the past couple of years to provide resources and assistance to veterans and their families. Outstations in Brentwood and Danville now supplement services delivered at the main office in Martinez and the Richmond location as well, but many veterans are reluctant to go to a county office for help. Thanks to a unique partnership within the County, help is now coming to them online and on cable TV.

Veterans' Voices is a live, interactive talk show hosted monthly by County Veterans Service Officer Nathan Johnson. Produced at the Contra Costa TV (CCTV) studios in Martinez, Veterans' Voices is specifically targeting vets with mental health issues, particularly those who haven't sought care before or aren't even sure what help is available. Each month, Nathan and co-host Kevin Graves focus on a specific topic, bring in guests, and take calls, emails and live chat messages from viewers. August's show featured authors who are using writing to express themselves as they've transitioned back to civilian life. September's show shined a light on the help caregivers can bring, and offers a glimpse into the experiences of those who provide that much needed care. October's show will air live on Monday, October 20th, at 7:00 p.m., will tackle the topic of suicide prevention.

Veterans' Voices airs at 7:00 p.m. the third Monday of each month on CCTV, and replays on Saturdays at 9:00 a.m., Mondays at 7:00 p.m. and Wednesdays at 11:00 p.m. CCTV can be found on Comcast Channel 27, Astound Channel 32, and AT&T U-Verse Channel 99. You can also watch any of the previous episodes online at the [Veterans' Voices website](#).



UNITED WE STAND

Dedicated to the memory
of those who were lost
on September 11, 2001

Napa Rocks, Contra Costa County Rolls

Whether you were jolted awake, felt a gentle rumbling or slept completely through it, the August 24 pre-dawn earthquake near Napa was a not-so-subtle reminder that we all need to prepare for the next “big one.”

For some Contra Costa County employees, that Sunday pretty quickly became a work day. Sheriff’s staff, through the Office of Emergency Services, began monitoring impacts right away, and they continue to gather information and coordinate the response in our area. There were many isolated incidents of minor damage in some of our cities and unincorporated areas, and some problems with county facilities as well. Broken water lines in the District Attorney’s downtown Martinez building leaked across several floors, damaging carpeting and drywall, and forcing the relocation of some servers to the Department of Information Technology during the repair work. Public Works crews surveying other county buildings found some minor problems at the Auditor’s Office, a shelter in Martinez and at the north wing of the County Administration building on Pine Street. Most of the problems were cosmetic.



Above: Damage was widespread throughout Napa



Quake impacts at the Rodeo Library.

Books tumbled off the shelves at the libraries in Rodeo and Crockett. Fire crews and building inspectors were also at work in Crockett checking on damage at private homes and businesses, mostly finding chimney damage. Public Works staff also partnered with the Contra Costa Water District to re-route traffic in Port Costa when a break in the main water line to a tank above the town required a road closure due to the threat of a landslide.

Contra Costa County also sprang to the rescue by providing support to the more critically hit Napa and American Canyon areas. The County’s EMS division provided additional ambulances on the day of the quake, and building inspectors have supplemented Napa staff in ensuring the safety of buildings in the most heavily impacted communities. Our Veterans Service Office opened its doors to give workspace to Napa County’s vets’ office when that location had to be red-tagged.

September is National Preparedness Month, but for many in our workforce and everyone in the east bay, the Napa quake served as a stark reminder that being prepared shouldn’t be tied to a time of the year. Everyone who sustained damage at their home or business will attest to that, and for those who escaped any problems, the message is still one we need to heed. On September 9, Sheriff David Livingston brought a resolution to the Board of Supervisors highlighting the theme of preparedness, and Sheriff’s Department leaders outlined their key messages: be informed, make a plan, build a kit, get involved. Those are words we’ve heard before, and maybe even shared with the public as government workers. With the 25th anniversary of the Loma Prieta earthquake just around the corner, there’s no time like now to make sure we’re following through on that message as well.

Century Club

UC Cooperative Extension Turns 100!

Long before people began virtual farming in Farmville, real farmers were raising crops and livestock in California with the guidance of University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) advisors. Today, California produces about 400 agricultural commodities valued at roughly \$44 billion annually, while UCCE still provides technical assistance to farmers, and so much more. These days, UCCE offers nutritional education and youth development programming, conveys growing advice to backyard gardeners/urban food growers and information on safely managing against pests. Have you had a tasty strawberry recently? If so, the odds are a UCCE researcher helped develop that strawberry variety!

This year, the University of California is celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Cooperative Extension statewide. UCCE is comprised of advisors, staff and specialists who bring university knowledge to farmers and families to enhance their health, their business and the environment.

“For the past century, UCCE specialists and advisors have been educating Californians in their communities, at their places of work, and even sometimes at their own homes,” said Barbara Allen-Diaz, Vice President of UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources that houses the program. “UCCE’s network of researchers and educators continue to work with Californians to address local issues and use science to solve problems.” UCCE researchers and educators live and work in each county so they can understand and address local economic, agricultural, environmental, youth development and nutrition issues.

On May 15th and 16th, the UCCE Nutrition and Master Gardener Programs, the Food Bank of Contra Costa, and Pittsburg Unified School District Nutrition Services hosted the Day of Nutrition and Physical Activity at the Mangini Agricultural Museum at the

Contra Costa Fairgrounds in Antioch. Hundreds of local elementary school kids rotated through various stations focused on healthy food and beverages, edible gardening, nutrition, and physical fitness. Stations included:

“Read It Before You Drink It! (teaching kids how to use beverage labels to calculate the amount of sugar in popular sugar-sweetened beverages); “There’s a Rainbow on My Plate,” which shows the many colors of fruits and vegetables available to eat and why variety is important; a physical fitness obstacle course; tasting fresh produce harvested from the garden; an exploration of historic agricultural tools and implements and more. The students who participated in the Day of Nutrition also received UCCE nutrition education in their classrooms through a partnership between the teacher and the UCCE nutrition educator. Other groups can also participate in a Day of Nutrition and Physical Activity too by contacting UCCE.

For more information about UC Cooperative Extension-Contra Costa County, visit the UCCE website at <http://cecontracosta.ucanr.edu>



The Contra Costa County Master Gardener Program volunteers grew and donated more than 3,000 pounds of organic food to needy families, volunteered 15,747 hours, and reached over 15,576 community residents while doing landscape/edible-gardening and natural resource education in fiscal year 2012-13.

Joining the Century Club Continued from page 19!

County Engineers Association of California

100 years ago, a small group of county engineers came together with the goal of “advancing county engineering in the state of California.” The upshot was the birth of the County Engineers Association of California, or CEAC. CEAC today includes county engineers, public works directors, road commissioners, surveyors and other professionals throughout the state. Our own Public Works Director Julie Bueren served as CEAC president during the 2010-2011 time period, and is active in planning the recognition statewide for the 100th birthday events.

With more than 312,000 miles of roads and 12,000 bridges crisscrossing California, CEAC’s backdrop has changed dramatically from days of horse-drawn carriages on dirt roads slowly

Program, establishing uniform signage to indicate important county routes. More recently, CEAC has focused on creating solutions for 21st century challenges throughout the state, such as crumbling roads and bridges in every part of California. CEAC initiated a 2007 Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment, evaluating the condition of city and county roads statewide. The information is updated now every two years, and the findings underscore the value and need to put resources into the system now to prevent even bigger funding problems in the future.

CEAC is investing in its own future by providing a scholarship program for students interested in a public service career in county engineering or surveying. To date, more than \$120,000 has been awarded to deserving students.

Current CEAC President Scott McGolphin of Santa Barbara County notes that “as we celebrate the first century of our outstanding organization, we must also set the course for CEAC’s next 100 years. As California has grown and changed over the last century, so has CEAC and its member counties. We must expand into new and different service areas that were not envisioned in 1914, and must continue to further our engineering methods and practices to meet future needs and challenges.”

Public Works Departments have taken on new service areas not even considered in 1914, from building management and park service to waste disposal and airport operations. CEAC has had to grow and reinvent itself over the past decade, and is poised to do more of the same over the next hundred years.



being replaced by newly paved streets and cars. Back then, county surveyors and engineers built the backbone of California’s infrastructure. Now, CEAC works collaboratively with representatives from all 58 counties to advise and advocate on policy issues throughout the state and beyond.

In the 1960’s, CEAC fostered the national adoption of the County Route Marker

